

## Report Of **Operations**

includes people with expertise and experience in aquaculture, abalone and economic development in Indigenous communities in South Australia. The SG has a staff member from both the ILC and LEA. The WG also includes consultants who are engaged to undertake various tasks as directed by the SG.

This year, the WG and GAC prepared an application to the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business. The application sought funding to employ a Project Officer to assist in carrying out duties as directed by the SG. The application was successful and the position will be filled for a minimum of twelve months.

During this year GAC has changed the specific focus from growing abalone to a broader aquaculture enterprise that involves the production of oysters on the 50 hectares of oyster leases that GAC already holds. The SG is currently developing a business plan for the oyster enterprise whilst further planning for the abalone project continues. Both enterprises will be planned within the context of a Point Pearce Aquaculture Enterprise.

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## **Strategic Development**

In October 2000 the Policy and Research section was renamed the Strategic Development Branch. This was in recognition of the responsibility for services in corporate governance and the Policies and Procedures Manual. The title, is more representative of this broader area of responsibility for the Branch.

The senior management portfolio for this Branch is held by the Eastern Divisional Manager

### **Policy and Research Section**

The Policy and Research Section of the Strategic Development Branch provides the following services to the organisation:

#### **Advice**

The section supports the land acquisition and management functions of the ILC by providing policy advice and support to Divisional land acquisition and management staff, the corporate management team, the CEO and Board.

The section provides key support in the LNPP by assisting staff to develop contracts, provide briefings to consultants and review their progress. The section also leads the review and evaluation of completed SROLN and provides support in the development of sub-regional strategies.

Staff have delivered presentations to divisional land management staff on land management powers under the *ATSIC Act*, land management policies and procedures.

During the year staff also gave a presentation to the Minister for Reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on the ILC's operating environment.

### **Research**

A key research activity of the past financial year was to identify the ILC's operating environment. This involved undertaking a number of projects in order to identify key drivers that impact upon the land acquisition and management functions of the ILC. The activity built upon previous projects undertaken by the section including the National Indigenous Land Management Research Project. The results of this research were presented to members of the corporate management team and the Board, and to a joint meeting of the ILC/ATSIC Boards.

Another activity was the development of the ILC toolbox. The toolbox contains information under the headings coordination database, regional profiles and alternative land use. The coordination database contains information on a range of agencies and their programs that may be of interest to Indigenous landholders. The regional profiles are utilised by staff for land needs planning and land management projects. Alternative land use contains information about a range of alternative land-based activities.

Commenced during the reporting period was the research project that identifies, describes and examines similarities and differences between the functions of the ILC and the land acquisition and land management functions of agencies servicing Indigenous groups in New Zealand, Canada, United States of America, and Scandinavian countries.

The section also provides support to divisional staff through the provision of library services and native title searches.

### **Coordination**

The section continued to provide a strong coordination role with other Federal agencies and research organisations. Staff have provided considerable input to other agencies, namely Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Australia (AFFA) and its FarmBis program, as well as research organisations such as the Weeds Cooperative Research Centre, and the Tropical Savannas Cooperative Research Centre Consultative Committee.

One key activity has been to provide these agencies with information about Indigenous landholders for them to consider in policy development. In this context the section has given presentations to a meeting of the FarmBis State Planning groups held in Canberra, the Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation and the National Land and Water Resources Audit (NLWRA) Rangelands Monitoring. The FarmBis presentation identified the extent of Indigenous landholdings, interest in land-based enterprises, key land use and land management issues, as well as identifying barriers that may restrict Indigenous access to the program.

The ILC is developing a strong working relationship with AFFA. It was involved in the review of tenders for an AFFA project, "a review of Indigenous access to AFFA programs", and continued to liaise with the successful consultant.

Staff have been involved in the review of the Tropical Savannas strategic plan and attended the Murray Darling Basin Commission strategic planning forum.

The ILC has also embarked on a project to develop arrangements between the ILC and Federal Government agencies and non-government organisations. Its aim is to coordinate activities and enable the provision of a wide and varied range of assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for land management activities.

Memoranda are being prepared with Environment Australia, Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries Australia, the Murray Darling Basin Commission, the Department of Transport and Regional Development, the Australian Bush Heritage Fund, Greening Australia, and the Australian Conservation Foundation.

**Submissions**

Staff have prepared a number of submissions in order to advocate Indigenous people's rights and interests in land, land uses, and land-based issues. The section prepared submissions to:

- the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs - Inquiry into the needs of country and metropolitan urban dwelling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- the Indigenous Land Use Agreement Inquiry Parliamentary Joint Committee on Native Title and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Fund
- the National Indigenous Aquaculture Development strategy
- the Draft Murray River salinity strategy
- AFFA's draft National Builder strategy
- the South Australian Government on proposed aquaculture legislation.

**Policy development**

The section has put considerable time and effort into policy development during this financial year. The section worked on the revision of the NILS, RILS and Guidelines for land acquisition and land management.

As a part of this policy development process a Regional Council Survey was undertaken and a statistical package developed as part of the material sent to ATSIC regional councils. Unfortunately, responses were received from only six Councils.

The National Indigenous Land Management Research Project, a combination of four research and consultation projects previously commissioned by the ILC, was utilised in the development of the ILC's second land management policy. This policy also utilised the outcomes of the ILC land management forum held in Adelaide, which involved ILC staff, relevant consultants and experts in the field of Indigenous land management. The draft second land management policy was eventually incorporated into the revised NILS.

This section was heavily engaged in the development of the draft NILS, RILS and the ILC/ ATSIC Boards meeting. As a result of the ILC/ATSIC joint Board meeting, the section initiated an ILC/ATSIC protocol.

There were 25 requests for information from the Minister for Reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs throughout the last financial year. The Strategic Development Branch replied satisfactorily to all those requests punctually.

### **Policy and Procedures Manual Section**

A two-person project was established in July 2000 to coordinate the preparation of a Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM) for all major activities within the ILC. This marked a departure from the process foreshadowed in the previous Annual Report and the project completion date is now expected to be late in 2001 or early 2002. The PPM will comprise 11 volumes, including the ILC Service Charter, dealing with land acquisition, land management, enterprise issues, finance, general administration, staffing and information technology systems. Substantial progress has been made with the PPM and sections of the manual are being issued as they are completed.

### **Evaluation Section**

The 2000-2001 year was the first full year this section was in operation. Its primary responsibility is to ensure that the ILC complies with all relevant legislation and guidelines, resulting in the ILC being fully accountable for its actions. Areas such as risk management, fraud control, the Service Charter, evaluation and quality assurance fall within the responsibility of the Evaluation Section.

The ILC's Service Charter was reviewed in March 2001 and significant changes were made. An integral part of the Service Charter is the Customer Service System, which is the mechanism that deals with all the feedback, including complaints, received by the ILC about its products and services. In the reporting period the ILC successfully resolved eight formal complaints.

The ILC's Risk Management policy was created and presented to the ILC Board in June 2001 for approval and subsequent implementation. This policy covers all ILC's operations and assists staff to identify risks and manage them in a responsible way.

One internal review was conducted during the year.

The section is also responsible for the production of the ILC's Annual Report.